

DAR
JK155
J4

CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN

JOHN JÁY AND HENRY B. DAWSON,

AND BETWEEN

JAMES A. HAMILTON AND HENRY B. DAWSON,

CONCERNING

THE FEDERALIST.

NEW YORK:

PRINTED BY J. M. BRADSTREET & SON


1864.

Mar
JK155
J42
cap. 2

PREFATORY NOTE.

TWO reasons have led to the re-publication of the following letters: the first, to gratify those who, in vain, have attempted to obtain copies of the newspapers which contained them; the second, to enable the public to understand more readily the motives which have influenced Mr. JOHN JAY in his continued and covert attacks on my character as a man and as a writer.

The letters of my opponents have been printed exactly as they appeared in *The Evening Post*, both in punctuation and spelling. My replies, also, have been exactly re-produced, except in those very few cases in which slight typographical errors have occurred.

 THE NOTE ON PAGE 26 WILL PARTICULARLY INTEREST THE READER.

HENRY B. DAWSON.

Morrisania, N. Y., December 7th. 1864

MR. JÁY'S LETTER TO MR. DAWSON.

[FROM "THE EVENING POST," TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1854.]

MR. HENRY B. DAWSON:

Sir:—I have your second note, asking me to give you, as soon as possible, for your second edition, any suggestions that have occurred to me in reading your introduction to the "Federalist."

I regret that a press of engagements has unavoidably interfered with the completion of an elaborate review of parts of your introduction which strike me as exhibiting grave errors of judgment, taste and fact, and as violating the truth of history and dishonoring the memory of the statesmen whose immortal work you have assumed to edit for the benefit of "the student and the scholar."

Not having leisure at this time to do justice to the subject, and deeming it possible that you may so amend your introduction as to render the publication of an elaborate review unnecessary, I will state to you briefly and frankly the principal points upon which I think you have fallen into errors that make your new edition of the Federalist an historic

libel, and convert it from a monument of the fame of its authors into an insult to their memory.

No more fitting time than the present could have been found, since the adoption of the Constitution, for the introduction of the "Federalist" as a text book into our schools and colleges. No previous generation could appreciate, as we can, the profound statesmanship of those essays whose influence extended through the newspaper press, secured, above all other influence, the adoption by the American people of the Constitution that rescued us from the imbecility of a confederacy, and constituted us one nation.

Our countrymen, however enthusiastic they may have seemed for Union in the past, are but just beginning to estimate aright the inestimable value of that Constitution as the guardian of American freedom, and the pillar of our national greatness.

The far-sighted wisdom of the federal leaders in warning their countrymen against the dangers that lurked in what *Washington* with prophetic vision was inclined to stigmatize as "that monster" state sovereignty, has been illustrated, as state theories have seldom been illustrated before, by events which have verified with marvellous power the utterances of the men who, nearly eighty years ago, expounded the constitutional principles and bearings of the government of which they were chief among the founders.

It might, I think, have been fairly presumed that at such a moment an editor assuming to put forth a standard edition of the "Federalist," professing, in the words of SELDEN, a desire that "truth and justice may moderate in all," would, in an introduction professedly historical, have exhibited a careful remembrance of familiar facts of American History, a respectful appreciation of the work itself, and a decent re-

gard for the fame of the departed statesmen whose writings he had voluntarily assumed to edit.

This reasonable assumption your introduction in my opinion fails to verify, and not simply in compliance with your request, but from a sense of what is due to myself, from the manner in which my name has been associated with your work, I will specify the points on which I regard it as open to severe—not to say indignant—criticism.

In the first place, I disapprove more strongly than I like to express, the deprecatory and patronizing tone in which you are pleased to discuss (pp. 22 and 23) the “Federalist,” damning it with faint praise, apologizing for the “confusion” which in your opinion marks its pages, and for the “imperfect illustrations by which it is disfigured,” kindly attributing these misfortunes to the fact that its distinguished authors were “hampered” by their unhappy “training in British schools,” and by their “imperfectly acquired knowledge of the ancient Republics.”

The most astute publicists of America and of Europe have failed to discover in the “Federalist” the imperfections by which its new editor regards it as disfigured, and for three quarters of a century it has challenged the admiration of the world for the clearness of its style, the force of its historic illustrations, and the deep and thorough acquaintance it exhibits with the elementary principles of governmental science in their practical application. The tone of your criticisms, grateful as it might have been to the anti-federalists of the last century, or to the ultra states rights party of our own day, to whom we are indebted for this rebellion, will I think jar upon the feelings of the American people who recur with increasing affection and admiration to the men whose writings you thus criticise and whose states-

manship you decry. I think your intelligent readers will regret that you had not approached the subject in the spirit of WEBSTER when he said, "I confess I love to linger around "these original fountains and to drink deep of their waters. "I love to imbibe in as full measure as I may, the spirit "of those who laid the foundations of the government, and "so wisely and skillfully balanced and adjusted its bearings "and proportions."

In the next place, I disapprove—and without violating the truth I might intensify the expression—of your singular misconception or misrepresentation of HAMILTON's magnificent logic and broad patriotism, when, in writing as you do for the youth of America, you attempt to belittle his grand and successful efforts to array the people on the one side of the constitution, by representing it as an "appeal to the cupidity "of the commercial classes." page 20.

Thirdly, I regard as a singular violation of historic truth your several charges and allegations in reference to the character, reputation, views, sentiments and conduct of my grandfather. In regard to these, I am prepared to show that your statement, p. 8, that JAY "found in the constitution little that he could approve and nothing for which he "could labor;" and your intimation on page 21, that he was "lukewarm" in his sympathy for the constitution, are absolutely at variance with the truth, and that they have not simply no foundation in fact, but not even the shadow of an apology.

Your allegation on page 17 that "some portion of his" (JAY's) "earlier political action was remembered (in 1787-8,) "to his disadvantage, and impaired his influence and his usefulness," is one of so grave a character that I need not enlarge on the propriety of your quoting what authority you can ad-

duce in justification of the charge, and of stating distinctly what portion of JAY's earlier political action had impaired the regard and confidence of his fellow-citizens.

Your averment on pages 17 and 18 that in the discussion of the great question of the day which attracted the attention of the people of the state of New York at the period referred to the people did not appear to have looked to JAY for counsel or personal leadership, strike one with surprise when they are compared with the well-known fact that of twenty-eight hundred and thirty-three votes given in the city of New York in the election of members to the State Convention to act upon the constitution, JAY received all but ninety-eight, and you will, perhaps, be good enough to state in your new edition whether that remarkable expression of public confidence in JAY, that vote of more than twenty-nine to one, is the proof upon which you rely for the statement, that the people did not look to him for guidance, or for the further statement upon which you boldly venture, that at that time "the greater number of his fellow-citizens considered him "selfish, unpracticable, and aristocratic."

I would recommend you also to explain how you reconcile your statement that "JAY's inclination does not seem to have "led him to take any part whatever" in those discussions, with his elaborate and thoughtful correspondence with WASHINGTON, with the fact that on his recovery from the injuries he received in the doctor's mob, which occurred soon after his contribution of the sixty-fourth number of the *Federalist*, he published an address to the people of New York in behalf of the constitution which was eulogized by WASHINGTON, HAMILTON and FRANKLIN; and with the further fact that in the New York convention, it was JAY, the author of the constitution of the state of New York, and at that time

the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, who at the close of the debates in which he had participated with HAMILTON and LIVINGSTON moved the adoption of the constitution which, on the final question, was ratified by a majority of three votes, although of the fifty-seven delegates forty-six at the opening of the session were ranked as anti-federalists; that JAY was selected to draft the circular letter to the states touching the desired amendments, and that JAY executed this task delicate as it was in view of the difficulty of meeting the views of men who differed so widely with such tact and discretion, that the letter reported by him commanded the unanimous approval of the Convention.

It will not be amiss for you to state also whether you regard his course in that Convention, prominent and triumphant as it was, as illustrating your declaration that JAY was accustomed to "push forward to the front for the establishment of "his own principles without swerving either to the right or to "the left, irrespective of the movements of his associates and "of the prejudices and sympathies and personal or local interests of those whom they led;" and whether you regard a blundering and stolid obstinacy, such as your language implies, was a leading feature in JAY's temperament, unfitting him for the position of a leader, as a chief element in the character of what you acknowledge him to have been, "an "acute and singularly successful diplomatist."

As to another matter of historic fact, you state, without reservation, on page 21, that JAY, "notwithstanding the lukewarmness of his sympathy, was induced to undertake those "portions of the discussion which related to the importance of "the Union in connection with the foreign relations of the "states and to the treaty making authority of the Senate, both "of them being subjects which his position enabled him to

“discuss with unusual ability, without compromising in the least his general political sentiments and without obliging him necessarily to assent even by implication to any portion of the proposed constitution.” You here distinctly intimate that JAY’s general political sentiments were such as to render him unwilling to assent even by implication to any portion of the constitution, and unwilling to assist in its establishment, but that he was induced by others to undertake certain subjects which he could perform (you do not explain how), without committing himself “to any portion.” I ask again for your authority for this monstrous libel upon JAY, the deliberate utterance of which seems to show that you have never read the life or letters of the statesman whose views you profess to portray, nor his address to the people of the state of New York, in behalf of the constitution, nor even the second, third, fourth, and fifth numbers of the “Federalist,” in which JAY bases the argument for the constitution and one national government, on the safety and welfare of the people, showing that the rejection of the constitution would put the continuance of the Union in the greatest jeopardy, and declaring, “I sincerely wish that it may be as clearly foreseen by every good citizen, that whenever the dissolution of the Union arrives, America will have reason to exclaim in the words of the poet, ‘Farewell, a long farewell to all my greatness!’ ”

I have never been called upon, and I never expected to be called upon to defend the fame of my ancestor from such charges as those which in the guise of editorial impartiality you have insinuated and expressed in what purports to be an historical introduction to the “Federalist.” I shall not trouble myself to inquire whether these charges have originated in ignorance or in malice, whether they result from the

prejudices of education as a states right democrat, or deeper yet, from your native British instincts, if, as I have heard you are by birth an Englishman, or whether they are in any way connected with the design announced in your prospectus to revive the anti-federal publications of "Cato," "Brutus," "CINCINNATUS" and "CENTINEL," from whose strenuous efforts to prevent the adoption of the constitution the country was so happily rescued by the earnest patriotism of the federalists. It would be my right, under any circumstances, to defend the fame of my grandfather from misrepresentation, and that right is in this case converted into a duty by the erroneous and unwarrantable impressions conveyed by the language of your "prospectus" and your "advertisement." In the prospectus you said: "In the preparation of this edition of the *Federalist* the subscriber has been favored with copies of the "family papers relative thereto of General HAMILTON and Chief Justice JAY, and has also the pleasure to announce, through "the further courtesy of Hon. JAMES A. HAMILTON and that of "JOHN JAY, Esq., original portraits of Messrs. HAMILTON and "JAY for the illustration of the work."

The latter clause touching the portraits is true; but what family papers of JAY or of HAMILTON, touching the "Federalist" had you when you wrote the "prospectus," or have you now? I gave you none such, for the reason that I had none to give. (I did not chance upon JAY's drafts of the numbers written by him until your volume was printed), and the sons of HAMILTON know of no such papers of their father. Produce the copies of "the family papers of General HAMILTON "and of Chief Justice JAY relative to the *Federalist*," which your published thanks to Mr. HAMILTON and myself in your advertisement may naturally induce the public to suppose were respectively contributed by us. Some stranger

may, perhaps, suppose that I have furnished you with family documents which justified your assaults upon the character of my ancestor, and any reader might infer from your "grateful acknowledgments" to me, for "kind assistance," and "friendly suggestions," and the rendition of your "heartfelt thanks," that if I had not suggested, I had at least acquiesced in the truth of your statements, so inconsistent with the record of his life, and so derogatory to his fame.

How far the courtesy I extended to you to assist in making your edition a worthy one, entitled me to anticipate an introduction disparaging the "Federalist" and caricaturing JAY, is a question of no sort of moment to me, however suggestive it may be to others. I refer to it simply as showing that you have yourself placed me in a position where self-respect alone would compel me to expose the injustice you have done to my grandfather.

One other matter I must allude to, for although it may seem trifling, after those that I have been considering, it is yet one that concerns the living as well as the dead. In reference to JAY it is perhaps not to be wondered at, that having assumed the right to mis-read his character, you should deem yourself entitled to mis-spell his name. In shewing me the volume you remarked that as JAY had written his name with an accent on the *a* and as you observed I followed his example, you saw no reason why you should not point it in the same manner. It is true that some of JAY's earlier signatures, though none of his later ones have a dash over the *a*, and that habit rather than reason has perpetuated it in my own autograph. But JAY had occasion to print his name as well as to write it, and as he never printed it with an acute accent nor with any accent whatever, nor his ancestors before him, nor his children nor grandchildren after him it strikes

me that your voluntary translation of the dash into an acute accent, and your transformation of it into print, without one word of consultation with the family, exhibits an independence alike of the rules of propriety and of orthography, which almost parallels the originality of your discovery as an historical editor that JAY found in the Constitution "little "that he could approve and nothing for which he could "labor."

Were it not for your personal explanation which is marvellously lame, especially when you jump to the conclusion as to the meaning of the dash, as an acute and not a circumflex accent,—were it not for that limping explanation, of which, however, not a word appears in your volume to account for the extraordinary change, one might suppose that the alteration had been suggested to you by some idea of fitness and harmony, that, having attempted to fasten grave charges on JAY's character you proposed to balance them by fixing an acute accent upon his name, and that after painting a portrait of him, which no well-informed American could recognise, you thought it but fair to give it a cognomen which his own family would disown.

In brief, sir, I would suggest that you shorten your introduction to the "Federalist" by striking out all your comments upon the work, all your strictures upon its authors, all, in short, that claims to be either critical or historical, and that you make what amends you may for the singular injustice which, whatever the motive or the cause, you have done to the authors of the "Federalist," and especially to my ancestor.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

MR. DAWSON'S REPLY TO MR. JÁY.

[FROM "THE EVENING POST," TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 1864.]

Morrisania, N. Y., February 22, 1864.

MR. JOHN JÁY:

Sir:—*The Evening Post* of the 16th inst., containing a letter which you have been pleased to address to me through the columns of that paper, reached me on Saturday evening, and the same mail also brought what appears to be a copy of the same letter, in manuscript, over your own signature, and post-marked "*New York City*, February 17,"—the day after the publication in *The Evening Post* to which I first referred.

Although I may reasonably question the "taste" which prompted you to reply to a private letter, containing a portion only of the correspondence on a subject of no interest to the public, through the columns of a public newspaper, I cannot do less than return to you my thanks for your careful attention to my expressed wish to correct any errors into which I may have fallen in my volume, which I communicated to you in the notes to which you have referred; and I promise myself much pleasure in giving to the several "suggestions"

with which you have publicly responded to my private invitations, all the consideration to which the unsupported word of their author and the character of the "suggestions" themselves may justly demand. When I shall do so, however, I may not (as I do not now) see the propriety of conducting my examination of the merits of your "suggestions" through the columns of the public press; and I may also see fit (as I now think I shall) to follow my own judgment rather than yours, not only in the process of such examination, but in the mode of communicating the result to the world.

I am gratified to learn, also, that you are sensible of the "duty" which you owe to "the fame of your grandfather." I regret that you are not equally sensible of the "duty" which you owe to yourself. It is, indeed, proper that you should remember with gratitude the grandfather through whose bounty you eat your daily bread in busy idleness; nor is it strange that you should be jealous of that other portion of your inheritance—"the fame of your grandfather"—your own best title to distinction. But it is to be regretted that the greatness of the "grandfather" is chiefly illustrated by the grandson in senseless imitations of his autograph, in frequent public announcements of the virtues and services of "my ancestor," and in an unseemly parade, at every opportunity, of illustrious descent. The fact that the JÁY family is not yet extinct may, to you, possess so much importance that the public press must needs be called on to bear your name, at short intervals, into every corner of the Union, as it has done, in connection with a great variety of subjects, for several years past; to me and to the public generally that fact is of far less consequence; and, perhaps when the last of the race shall have been sent to his reward, the world will survive the shock produced by his exit, and will continue to move as it moved

before the first of the JÁYS emerged from his original obscurity on the domain of the Baron de Tilley. You will pardon me, therefore, if for the present, at least, I decline to engage in any public controversy whatever, unless it shall be for the protection of my own character as a writer and a man.

In thus declining, at present, to neglect my daily business as well as my literary labors, for the purpose of engaging in a newspaper discussion of useless questions, I beg you to believe that I have not lost sight of the main subject of your letter—"my grandfather," JONN JÁY. For the discussion of that subject, when you shall have become acquainted with the "familiar facts of American history" to which you so familiarly allude, but, as your letter in the *Evening Post* sufficiently proves, of which you personally know so little—a common occurrence among those who assume to be what they are not; when you shall have read and ascertained the meaning of the life and letters of JONN JÁY and the second, third, fourth and fifth numbers of "*The Fæderalist*," to all of which you have so politely referred me; and when the political history of New York, even in its most condensed form, shall have been read and understood by you—by which time I will have more leisure than I now have to attend to the discussion—you will not find me backward in meeting you, either in private or through the public press, whenever and as often as your inclination may prompt you to the undertaking. Indeed, as far as my existing business and literary engagements will permit, I hold myself in constant readiness to meet you, as one *man* should meet another, *with my documents against your documents*. In the course of that discussion, when it shall take place, it will be your "duty" and mine to examine your "grandfather" both as a man, a professor of religion, and a politician; as a British subject and as a citizen of an inde-

pendent republic; as a friend and supporter of the Royal Colonial government in New York, and as an open and untiring opponent of popular rights in America; as a member of "Popular Committees," of Provincial Congresses, of State Conventions, and of Continental Congresses; as an active opponent of "Independence" in the Continental Congress of 1776, and as its spasmodic supporter, after twelve of the thirteen Colonies had become "Free and Independent States," in the Provincial Congress of New York; as the *secret* opponent of FRANKLIN in the formation of the treaty of 1783, as the nominal friend and supporter of that treaty at the time of its execution, and as the first of those who had signed it, subsequently to repudiate its terms; as "PUBLIUS," and as the open opponent of "PUBLIUS's" sentiments; as one of the authors of "*The Fæderalist*," and yet *not* an advocate of the proposed Constitution; in short, as the earnest and consistent advocate of a concentration of political power in the few, *of whom he should always be one*, and the equally earnest and consistent opponent of the political equality of the many, *of whom he should never be one*: the result of that examination will show which of the two, my "Introduction" to "*The Fæderalist*" or your letter in *The Evening Post*, has most truly described his character; and the public shall then determine which of the two, you or I, is the caricaturist and the libeler.

I defer this discussion because I am a workingman—one of the "many" whom the JÁYs have continued to despise: your grandfather's fortune makes you master of your time; my grandfather's poverty—as honorable, to say the least of it, as the wealth of the other—has given me no such advantage.

I shall also require you, as you will have perceived, in the discussion to which you have invited me, to produce stronger evidence than your own statements or the traditions of your

family. Your letter proves that the naked word of a professed gentleman is worth no more than his who makes no pretensions to that "idle trade," and assumes no superiority on account of it. The fact that an American Chief-Justice was your "grandfather" does not invest your unsupported assertion with any greater authority than it would have been entitled to had he been, as my grandfather was, an honest English laborer; and I propose to give all I demand from you, undoubted contemporary evidence of the entire truth of what I assert.

There is one portion of your letter, however, which demands an immediate reply.

You have been pleased to introduce to the notice of your readers a "Prospectus" for a small and special edition of two hundred and fifty copies of "*The Fæderalist*" which was printed and, to a small number of my friends and acquaintances, was sent out in letter form nearly two years ago. In that "Prospectus" I used the following language: "In the 'preparation of this edition of '*The Fæderalist*' the subscriber 'has been favored with copies of the family papers relative 'thereto of General HAMILTON and Chief Justice JAY;" and against the truth of that language you take exceptions. In allusion to it you ask: "What family papers of JAY or HAMILTON, touching '*The Fæderalist*,' had you, when you wrote the "'Prospectus,' or have you now?" adding, by way of gravamen to that which you intend for an impeachment of my integrity as the editor of the work: "I gave you none such, for the 'reason that I had none to give, and the sons of HAMILTON know 'of no such papers of their father." You then arrogantly order me to "produce the copies of the family papers of General 'HAMILTON and Chief-Justice JAY relative to '*The Fæderalist*' "which your published thanks to Mr. HAMILTON and myself in

“your ‘Advertisement’ may naturally induce the public to “suppose were respectively contributed by us;” insinuating, meanwhile, what you dare not say openly, that I never had any such papers from any person whatever, and charging me, by innuendo at least, with falsehood and deceit.

As “Mr. HAMILTON,” the respected second son of General HAMILTON, to whom you refer, read that portion of the “Advertisement” to which you have alluded, in the proof-sheets, without suggesting any change whatever in the portion to which you have objected; and as he has subsequently been pleased to approve, in the kindest and most gratifying terms, my entire volume as it has been given to the public and my whole course as its editor, without the least exception, I respectfully suggest that you shall seek some other person with whom you can associate yourself in the prosecution of your charges, allowing me, meanwhile, to consider you, for the purposes of this letter, my sole accuser.

You say, concerning the family papers of JAY, relative to “*The Federalist*,” “I [*you*] gave you [*me*] none such;” and on that slight foundation you assume that I have had no such “family papers of JAY” at any time, past or present, from any other person; and, by innuendo, you accuse me of falsehood and deceit. If it will gratify you, I will admit, as I do admit, that I have not received from *you*, at any time, any papers whatever “relative to ‘*The Federalist*,’” *per se*, except the original drafts of “Number LXIII”; but you must admit that I never said, even in the “Prospectus” which you have quoted from, that *you* had given any such papers to me at any time; and you must also admit, if you are not a willing slanderer, that the only foundation for your insinuation has been your own disordered imagination. Indeed, I challenge you to produce a single specimen of “Prospectus,” “Advertisement,” or any

other publication, either by myself or my publisher, wherein it is stated, either by me or for me, that *you* had given to me any such "family papers of JAY" as you have described, or any others.

You say, concerning the family papers of General HAMILTON, "relative to '*The Fœderalist*'": "The sons of HAMILTON know "of no such papers of their father;" and, on that slight foundation, also, you seek to fasten on me the guilt of falsehood and false pretence. The ignorance of "The sons of HAMILTON" on the subject referred to, or on any other subject, certainly is not a crime in me. It is their misfortune, not my fault; and neither you nor they nor the public can justly censure me for their ignorance. "The sons of HAMILTON" will not say that "the family papers" of their father have not embraced, at any time, any such papers as you have described; and they are too well acquainted with the history of those "family papers," subsequent to the lamented fall of their father, to deny that my opportunity to know their contents, and to obtain copies of any or all of them, has been quite as good as their own. Whether or not *they* know of any such "family papers of "HAMILTON," is quite immaterial to me. *I* know there were and are such papers, and that I possessed copies of them at the period to which you allude in your letter.

Without noticing in detail your perversion of the language of my "Prospectus"—in which case the "*copies* of the family "papers" to which I have referred were described by you as the "family papers" themselves—I submit that I have met your insinuations, and that I might reasonably rest my case. I trust, however, that the editor of *The Evening Post* will pardon me if I advance still further in the examination of your letter.

Although, in my "Prospectus," for a privately printed edi-

tion of "*The Fæderalist*"—of which only a few copies were issued, in letter form, nearly two years ago—I stated: "In the preparation of this edition of '*The Fæderalist*' [*to which were to be added an historical introduction and foot notes*]" "the subscriber has been favored with copies of the family papers, "relative thereto, of General HAMILTON and Chief Justice JÁY," without indicating the source of that favor, I might have done so by using your name, had I been disposed, without having seriously compromised the truth.

In answer to a note which I had addressed to you, at the instance of one of your most intimate friends and a connection of your family, concerning the family papers of JÁY relative to "*The Fæderalist*," I received from you in the early part of March, 1862, a letter covering sixteen pages of note-paper, dated "*The Jay Homestead, Bedford, Katonah P. O., February 18, 1862,*" and post-marked "*Washington, D. C., March —, 1862,*" in which you discussed, with much minuteness and apparent good will, the authorship and publication of "*The Fæderalist*," adding that, "As I am leaving home to-morrow for Washington, I am unable immediately to examine my grandfather's papers in reference to your inquiry," and promising, "If on my return from Washington I shall find any I will send you copies of them." You also offered in that letter one of those "friendly suggestions" to which you have so politely referred—that "to include in the introduction or "foot-notes memoranda of the views of the authors as expressed "in their correspondence:" and you enforced it by a careful reference to "an interesting correspondence [*by your grandfather*]" "with General WASHINGTON and Mr. JEFFERSON, on the "subject of the inefficiency of the Confederacy, the necessity of "a Convention to form a more stable government, and the general features which should characterize its Constitution."

On the seventeenth of March, 1862, in reply to a second note from me on the same subject, you addressed to me a four-page letter, in which you stated that you had looked through the papers of JAY during the close of 1787, and the greater part of 1788, without finding anything bearing upon the subject of "*The Fœderalist*;" although you subsequently stated in the same letter, "I enclose brief extracts from letters of JAY to ADAMS, dated the 3d and 16th October, 1787, referring to the Constitution [*the subject of both my proposed 'Introduction' and 'The Fœderalist' itself*]," and one from WASHINGTON to JAY, March 3, 1788. I believe that none of these have been published." Although in your search among "the family papers" of JAY which are in your possession, you found nothing concerning "*The Fœderalist*" itself, you did find some papers relating to the subject on which "*The Fœderalist*" treated—"The Constitution;" and from the fact that *you* sent "copies" of those papers to me in response to my inquiry for papers relative to "*The Fœderalist*," it is very evident that *you* supposed, at that time, the three papers which you enclosed in your letter answered the description. Whether or not I concurred with you in that supposition is not evident from any of my papers, as your name, in connection with "the copies of the family papers of JAY and of HAMILTON," which I proposed to employ, does not appear in any of them. Had I concurred with you, and referred to you as the source from whence I had received a portion of my "copies of the family papers of Chief-Justice JAY," *which I did not do*, I maintain that your letter of the 17th of March, 1862, would have afforded a sufficient warrant; and I could have gone before the world with that letter as my justification, and by it have been acquitted.

As my facilities for acquiring information concerning "*The*

Fæderalist” were increased from time to time, I became myself satisfied of the comparative unimportance of the family papers of JAY and HAMILTON “relative to “*The Fæderalist*,” *per se*, and I discontinued my references to them as deserving special notice. As far as my recollection serves me at this moment, I know of no instance in which the “copies of the “family papers of General HAMILTON and Chief Justice JAY,” have been publicly referred to, either by my publishers or myself, in connection with even the privately printed edition of “*The Fæderalist*,” much less with that which you have criticised, to which the much talked of “Prospectus” had no reference—the trade edition of my book; nor would they have merited particular notice at this time, had not you thought it proper to fit them to your invention of a charge of falsehood against me, more ingenious than ingenuous.

It is proper for me to state, however, that the “copies of “family papers of JAY and HAMILTON,” which I possess, including those which you have sent to me, are not without great value in the illustration of the subject on which “*The Fæderalist*” treats, and of the causes which produced that invaluable work; and that in my own time and in the mode which I shall prefer, more or less of them will be given to the world. Whether “the fame of your grandfather” shall be promoted by such publication, or the reverse, is a matter which concerns me less than the truth of history; and whether you shall maintain the airs of superiority which you have assumed with equal arrogance and injustice, or act in a manner consistent with your social pretensions, will not in the least disturb my quiet.

Having confronted you, my accuser, before the tribunal to which you have called me, I believe I may appeal with confidence to our country and to the world to judge between us.

If language may be attributed to *me* which I have never employed, if that which I have said may be perverted and mutilated with impunity, if the "ignorance" of third parties, concerning their family affairs, may be imputed to *me* as a crime, if your own conclusions concerning the character of certain papers—whether concurred in by me or not—are to be considered as *my* acts, if your assumption of dignity and your regard for "the fame of your grandfather" may be considered a warrant for the removal of the landmarks of our country's history—as a license for the justification of the prostitution of her laws and the overthrow of her distinctive form of government, you may consistently convict me of falsehood and deceit on the subjects referred to in your letter and on the evidence adduced therein. If I know my country and the world aright—and I trust I do—the shallowness of your pretensions and the insolence of your demands will be clearly perceived, and the blow which was intended for my destruction will recoil on your own head with a lasting effect.

One subject more, in your letter, demands my attention. You allude to my "native British instincts," to the fact of my foreign birth, and to my "education as a States'-rights democrat."

Even the *Jáys* have not escaped criticism for their "British instincts"—in some instances severe criticism; and it is said that you, yourself, have not been without your yearnings for the flesh-pots of that British Egypt—the Court of St. James—and your chagrin at the greater success in the struggle to reach them of the distinguished son of Massachusetts whom you attempted to rival. Cannot the occupant of the "*Jay Homestead*" allow me to possess even an instinct in common with his family; or does he desire to monopolize all that is "British" for his own special benefit?

I *was* born in England nearly forty-three years ago, but I have yet to learn that that was any fault of mine, or may reasonably be brought against me at this time as a subject of censure. Thirty years of my life, within a few months, have been spent in New York; and to her common schools and to her institutions am I mainly indebted for the little amount of knowledge which I possess. I was withdrawn from the Public Schools in the city of New York to labor in the fields when I was only fourteen years of age; and, with the exception of a single winter which I subsequently spent in school, I have labored steadily since that time—as I still labor, day by day—for my daily bread; while that which many others call “leisure” has been spent, and is still regularly spent, by me in honest attempts to be useful to myself and my country. Their results are not unknown even to you; and they have not been without their rewards: the generous respect which I have enjoyed, and still enjoy, from those whose friendship I may justly esteem is the recompense of my earnest efforts to deserve it. Even the JÁYS have not considered me beneath their notice; and several years since, when the foundations of the great Republican party were to be laid, you, my accuser, as the Chairman of its founders, considered me worthy to be at the head of a committee, with two distinguished democrats as my associates, to whom was confided the important duty of preparing its “platform,” the original of which, in my handwriting, and bearing the signatures, among others, of my fellow members JOHN JÁY and the venerable WILLIAM JÁY, is in my possession. I am an Englishman by birth; by choice I am a citizen of New York, and “if that is treason, make the most of it!”

I am, also, “a States’-rights democrat.” This no one knows better than you, since at one time, with your honoured father,

you were my associate in that profession; and while I was only the Vice-President, you were the active President of the only party organization which publicly recognized the sovereignty of the States as a "plank" in its "platform." The only difference between us at that time was this: I was "a States'-rights democrat" from a well-grounded conviction of the general correctness of the doctrines of that party, derived from a careful study of the history and Constitutions of the country; while you were one only because you supposed that you might thereby the sooner establish yourself politically among the Germans and other European Republicans, and, as it has since appeared, the sooner obtain your translation to London. *You* failed in your aspirations; and, filled with chagrin, you now consider your former platform "a monster." *I* sought nothing; was not disappointed; and am still "a States'-rights democrat"—just such an one, too, as your "ancestor" was when, on the 26th of July, 1788, he voted in the affirmative, in the Convention of this State, on "the Bill of Rights and form of the ratification of the Constitution for the United States;" and two days later, when he penned that "Circular Letter to the States touching the desired Amendments" to that Constitution, to which you have so unwittingly alluded.

In conclusion, allow me to inquire, if you are so "rigidly righteous" as you assume to be, why you have allowed two years to elapse since the issue of the "Prospectus" to which you have referred, without having noticed, either publicly or privately, until the publication of your letter in *The Evening Post* of the 16th inst., the falsehood which you have been pleased to contrive out of it; and why, notwithstanding the alleged deceit which it conveyed, have you continued to extend to me, during those two years, all the courtesies which

I could reasonably desire? Be kind enough to inform me if the two splendid specimens from the "family papers of JAY" relative to the 'Federalist,' with which you favored me less than three months ago—two original drafts of number LXIII., in different stages of its composition, by your "grandfather"—were intended as evidences of your disapproval of the terms of my two years old "Prospectus;" and if, in your opinion, the "ignorance" concerning those two papers, as well as that of the subject of their authorship, which "the sons of HAMILTON," and even General HAMILTON himself, have displayed, has not rendered them as valueless as a similar "ignorance" on the part of the former has done in the case of my copies of other "family papers," referred to in my "Prospectus?" Have you, since the publication of my volume in December last, received new light concerning your "duty" to "the fame of your "grandfather;" or is your newly-fledged zeal only the result of an alliance which you have formed within the past few weeks for other and less hallowed purposes than "duty" and justice? Is it not the simple truth that you never saw in that "Prospectus" anything to which you could object until you had been visited, at a very recent date, by a well-known literary adventurer who assumes to be my rival, and aspires to the honor of editing "*The Federalist*;" and is it not equally true that, in the publication of your letter in *The Evening Post* you have been pushed forward to reconnoitre my position and to draw a fire which he was too much of a coward to receive in person?

I am sensible of the true reasons which have actuated you, as well as those which have influenced your ally, "Historicus," in his timid support of your movement, by his letter "To the editor of *The Times*," which appeared on the morning of the 17th instant; and I am equally sensible of the sadness of the

spectacle which is presented by the association, in the graceless task of defamation, of a descendant of "the young West-Indian" and a grandson of him who was one of the objects of that young stranger's first and most withering denunciations. It may be explained by the fact that both alike bear the names of noted men; that both alike are jealous of that which each considers the "fame of his ancestor;" that both alike fear the result of an honest, earnest and independent exposition of the truth. Each of you is more or less a pretender; each has endeavored, in his own way, to envelope his family with a "glory" which shall rival that which is said to surround the heads of the saints; each, like another sorcerer, has succeeded only in raising a smoke, with which he hopes to deceive the spectators and secure for himself and his family the veneration of the world. It has become my duty to examine minutely, and to set forth publicly, *the exact truth* concerning the political opinions and actions of those on whose names you chiefly rely for attention. The mystery with which each of you has attempted to conceal the history of your respective ancestors, the purity of their opinions, and the privacy of their writings, you suppose, are about to be looked into; and, as you and he fear the falsehoods which have been asserted by each of you in their names, and the errors which have been propagated by each of you under the unauthorized warrant of their unquestioned greatness, are about to be exposed in all their naked deformity, you shrink from the expected exposure; and, assuming an air of virtuous indignation that even a truth has been told concerning your "ancestor," to which the JÁYs have not previously given currency or stamped as genuine, you appeal to the public to sustain your pretensions, and you seek to destroy that which you know you cannot silence. It is well for me, and it is well for

the truth of history, that you are not unknown either in Church or State; and, in view of that knowledge, I may ask, and the public may ask, as was asked concerning the pretenders in Rome in the days of JUVENAL :

—"quis enim generosum dixerit hunc, qui
Indignus genere, et præclaro nomine tantum,
Insignis ?"

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

HENRY B. DAWSON.

[For reasons which, no doubt, were satisfactory to himself, Mr. JAY did not continue his correspondence with Mr. DAWSON; and the "Reply" of the latter, therefore, closed the discussion between those gentlemen. At a subsequent date [April 28, 1864], however, Mr. JAY caused to be printed, in pamphlet form, and addressed "*To the Editor of the Evening Post*;" a "*Second Letter on Dawson's Introduction to The Federalist*;" but, before the close of the day on which it was issued, so grossly libellous was its character, the respectable house through which it was published removed it from its counters and steadily refused to circulate it under any circumstances. That Mr. JAY himself soon after concurred in that view of the character of his pamphlet, and that, *in person*, he assisted in a still further removal of it from the public eye, is shown in the following letter from Mr. BYNCE, Mr. GREGORY's business manager—the gentleman through whom the pamphlet referred to was originally introduced to the public.

"JAMES G. GREGORY, Publisher,

"No. 540 BROADWAY,

"NEW YORK, May 28, 1864.

"H. B. DAWSON, Esq. :

"DEAR SIR :—I have to inform you that on Monday of last week (the 16th), "the entire edition of the pamphlet, entitled 'Mr. JAY's *Second Letter on Dawson's Introduction to The Federalist*,' in our hands, was in my presence "thrown into a furnace by Mr. JAY, and all the copies entirely burned and "consumed. The number so destroyed was something over eight hundred "copies, and included all received by Mr. GREGORY from Mr. JAY, excepting

"those distributed to the New York press, and some twenty or thirty copies sold.

"Yours respectfully,

"OLIVER B. BUNCE."

Addressed "HENRY B. DAWSON, Esq."

From an article which appeared in the columns of "*The Statesman*," a weekly newspaper printed at Yonkers, N. Y., on Thursday, November 24, 1864, and from other information, it appears that Mr. JAY has been engaged during the summer in circulating, *covertly*, copies of his "*Second Letter*" for the purpose of effecting *surreptitiously* what he failed to accomplish in an open and manly contest, in which Mr. DAWSON could see his opponent and provide for his defence.

From Mr. JAY's own action in the premises, as set forth in Mr. BUNCE's letter, the public may understand not only the merits of his charges against Mr. DAWSON's character, but the exact value of his own claims to gentility; and it may learn, also, therefrom how sadly the race has degenerated since Mr. JAY's name was borne by a Chief Justice of the United States.]

MR. HAMILTON'S LETTER TO MR. DAWSON.

[FROM "THE EVENING POST," N. Y., WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 1864.]

TO THE EDITORS OF THE EVENING POST:

MR. DAWSON, in a letter to Mr. JOHN JAY, of the 23d February last, says: "MR. HAMILTON" (alluding to me) "read that portion of the advertisement to which you allude, in the proof sheets, *without suggesting any change whatever in the portion to which you have objected*, and as he has subsequently been pleased to approve my entire volume as it has been given to the public, and my whole course as its editor without the least exception, I respectfully suggest," &c. &c.

That part of the proof sheets objected to by Mr. JAY was as follows:

"It remains only for me to acknowledge gratefully the kind assistance, often accompanied with friendly suggestions, which I have received from time to time from J. A. HAMILTON and JOHN JAY, and to return my heartfelt thanks."

This advertisement is dated July 13, 1863. On the 31st July, 1863, Mr. DAWSON wrote to me, enclosing the proofs as follows: "I send herewith for your perusal rough proofs of the opening pages of," &c., &c.

This letter was received on the 1st August, and on the same day the proofs were returned, with a letter in which I said :

“Having read them (the proofs) with all the care my feeble health permits, the only change I have made is to strike my name from the number of those from whom you have received advice or assistance in your work ; I have done so under a conviction that I have not rendered you any ; certainly not such advice or assistance as permits such a notice, much less calls for it ; and because I do not choose to be considered *in any respect responsible* for the work I have not examined. * * * I observe with regret, that your introduction bears hardly upon Mr. DUANE, and that others whose conduct was really censurable are not noticed.

“When you returned the papers I loaned to you, with the assurance that you had not and did not intend to use them, I was cut off from the privilege of offering advice in connection with the work. A part of those papers referred ‘to the part which each took in its execution,’ and contained important facts, some of which I am quite sure you cannot get elsewhere.”

The reference in the foregoing letter to papers loaned by and returned to me by Mr. DAWSON was *not* to “family papers,” for none such existed, at least to the knowledge of General HAMILTON’s family, but to extracts from reviews and memoranda in relation to the authorship of the numbers of the “Federalist” which I had obtained from time to time.

It appears thus clearly that I had requested my name to be stricken out of the advertisement (this was not done), and had also objected to the introduction in other respects, immediately upon seeing the “rough proofs of its opening pages,” and yet Mr. DAWSON, in his letter to Mr. JAY, makes the asser-

tion I have quoted above in regard to my approval of his whole course, and not suggesting any change whatever.

Subsequently, when Mr. Dawson sent to me a copy of his work, I addressed to him the following note, January 2, 1864:

"I received, on the 27th ult., your first volume of the 'Federalist,' for which receive my thanks. As I have not had time to read your introduction, I can only say that it is published in a most accomplished manner, indeed nothing could be better. I sincerely hope you may be requited by a rapid sale, which I will do all in my power to promote."

I understand this note has been published, omitting that part in which I say I have not had time to read the introduction.

Afterwards, on the 9th January, I addressed him a note, in which I stated that his introduction was "highly interesting," or to that effect—meaning to refer to his account of the various editions of the "Federalist" published in this country and in France.

My attention was not called, however, to that part of it criticising Mr. JAY and referring to Mr. HAMILTON's strategy to affect his object, until after the publication of Mr. JOHN JAY's letter of February 13, 1864.

It is hardly necessary for me to add, that those portions of the introduction are as objectionable to me as that part relating to Mr. DUANE, of which I have already expressed my opinion.

The only other point personal to myself, to which I shall allude, refers to "copies of *family papers*." Mr. Dawson, in September, 1862, enclosed a printed prospectus containing the following paragraph:

"In the preparation of this edition of the 'Federalist' the subscriber has been favored with copies of the family papers

“relative thereto, of General HAMILTON and Chief Justice JAY, and he has also the pleasure to announce that, through the further courtesy of Hon. JAMES A. HAMILTON and that of JOHN JAY, Esq., original portraits of Messrs. HAMILTON and JAY will be used for the illustration of this work.”

I assumed, of course, that the words “further courtesy” referred to me, as the person who had favored the editor with “copies of the family papers,” and wrote to Mr. Dawson on the 20th September as follows: “Your prospectus is received. I regret to find in it this statement; ‘In the preparation of this edition of the “Federalist” the subscriber has been favored with copies of the family papers relative thereto of General HAMILTON.’ I have no knowledge of any family papers of General HAMILTON, and did not favor you with copies of such papers; my brothers and friends know such papers do not exist. You therefore place me in a false position of having made a false representation to you. Be so good as to inform me of the papers to which you refer as having been given to you by me which justify this assertion. I shall be driven to make a public denial of your statement.”

To this letter Mr. Dawson replied on the 24th September. In his note, after stating that he did not perceive the force of my exception, he says: “I have no desire, nor have I the time, to engage in an unpleasant controversy, either privately or through the press. I prefer rather, out of respect to you and out of respect to myself, to announce to the very few who have received my circular, as I will do immediately and fully, that they need not expect any use by me of papers or information which have been received from you, or for which you are responsible, except those which have appeared elsewhere over your own signature. P.S. I return with thanks the enclosed

“letters, &c., of which I have reserved no copy or portion of a copy, notwithstanding the interest they possess to me.”

It will be remarked that my note, to which the above was a reply, brings distinctly to Mr. DAWSON'S notice that I inferred that I was referred to as the person who had favored him with copies of the family papers, and calls upon him to justify the assertion.

His reply is an admission that such was the true interpretation of his letters. If it had not been he would have said so; but on the contrary he admits it by his promise to announce to the very few, &c.

As this note did not contain a frank avowal that I had not furnished “copies of the family papers, &c.,” which I certainly did not, and did not know that any such existed—and I must add that I do not now believe any such exist—I wrote again to Mr. DAWSON, enumerating particularly the papers I had loaned to him, and which he had returned to me, and reiterated my statement that I had not furnished him with such papers as in his circular he alleged I had. But I was again unable to obtain from him an admission that the statement in the circular as to family papers was, so far as I was concerned, wholly unfounded.

At my advanced age, I should not have been induced to comment on Mr. DAWSON'S assertions, had it not been that one of them placed me in the position of making a false representation to him, and through him to the public; and the other as approving a criticism on my father in which he is represented in the language of an intelligent correspondent “as a “mere politician, deliberately uttering conscious sophisms and “absolute untruths for the purpose of cheating the people into “a course of action that should serve his selfish ends and those “of his party.”

That this is a just view of that part of his introduction referring to General HAMILTON will be apparent to any one who will read it attentively, and yet Mr. DAWSON asserts that I approve of this with the rest of his entire volume.

Surely even the slightest respect for a father's memory would not permit such an assertion to pass uncontradicted.

As to Chief Justice JAY, "whose wisdom, foresight, firmness "and patriotism always distinguished him," and who enjoyed in an eminent degree the confidence of WASHINGTON as well as of his most distinguished contemporaries, it is impossible that I could have approved the groundless strictures upon his conduct and character.

A "literary detective" with a taste for calumny who will go mousing about the scurrilous publications of the country during the period of our *ferocious party conflicts*, will find that the wisest, purest and most patriotic men of those times on the one side and the other were the subjects of most atrocious libels; and among others he will find that JAMES THOMPSON CALLENDER, an English hired calumniator, in a work published in 1800, wrote thus of WASHINGTON:

"By his own account, therefore, WASHINGTON has been twice "a traitor. He first renounced the King of England and there- "after the confederacy." Again: "The extravagant popularity "possessed by this citizen" (WASHINGTON) "reflects the utmost "ridicule on the discernment of Americans. He approved of "the funding system, the assumption and the national bank; "and in addition to his own solemn promise he authorized "the robbery and ruin of the remnant of his army."

At this day it cannot be necessary to vindicate the "Federalist" or its authors from Mr. DAWSON's criticisms.

For over three quarters of a century it has been studied and admired wherever constitutional liberty has been valued, and

will endure for the solid merit it possesses. M. Guizot, who is respected in Europe as among the most learned and profound of living statesmen, refers to it in the following language :

“In the discussions of the numbers” (The “Federalist”), “for all that combines a profound knowledge of the great elementary principles of human government with the wisest maxims of practical administration, I do not know in the whole compass of my reading, whether from ancient or modern authors, so able a work.”

The *Edinburgh Review* says: “‘The Federalist’ is a publication that exhibits an extent and precision of information, a profundity of research, and an acuteness of understanding, which would have done honor to the most illustrious statesmen of ancient or modern times.”

JAMES A. HAMILTON.

April 4, 1864.

MR. DAWSON'S REPLY TO MR. HAMILTON.

[FROM "THE EVENING POST," FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 1864.]

Morrisania, N. Y., April 8, 1864.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE EVENING POST:

A few weeks since I was constrained to ask your indulgence while I defended myself, through your columns, against an assault which had been made on my character by JOHN JÁV. I am compelled, a second time, to appeal to your kindness while I notice, as briefly as possible, a letter, over the signature of JAMES A. HAMILTON, which appeared in your columns on Wednesday last, the sixth instant.

MR. HAMILTON is an aged gentleman, retired from the bustle of life, with abundant leisure to follow the bent of his inclination whithersoever it may lead him. My personal acquaintance with him is of many years' standing; and, notwithstanding we have crossed lances before, the animosities of the moment have steadily passed away, leaving no ill-feeling behind them to mar the general harmony of our intercourse. He has rendered services to me for which I shall never cease to be grateful; and not even the letter to which this is a reply can impair the high respect which I have long entertained for

himself and for the members of his own immediate family—the living as well as the departed.

Mr. HAMILTON's letter consists of what he wishes to be considered a denial that "he has been pleased to approve my entire volume ['The Fæderalist'] as it has been given to the public, and my whole course as its editor, without the least "exception;" of his denial that *he* has furnished me with "family papers relative to 'The Fæderalist,'" of which he denies the very existence; of his disapprobation of an assumed insult, in my volume, to the memory of his father; of an endorsement by him of the character of Chief-Justice JÁY; and of a couple of commendatory notices of "*The Fæderalist*" itself.

Concerning "*The Fæderalist*" and Chief-Justice JÁY, Mr. HAMILTON's opinions will pass for what they are worth, and no more; nor can the name he bears add an iota to the value of his endorsement, either of the Chief-Justice or of "*The Fæderalist*."

Concerning his indirect denial of what I claim to be his approval of my editorial labors, I have a few words to say.

Mr. HAMILTON has referred to the "rough proof-sheets" which, on the thirty-first of July, 1863, I sent to him for examination and correction; which were returned by him to me on the following day with only one proposed correction; and which were corrected, in part, to meet his expressed wish. Now, Messrs. Editors, Mr. HAMILTON has not only *not* quoted from "the rough proof-sheets," as he pretends in his letter to you, but, by omissions and interpolations, he has misrepresented the language of the corrected proofs and of the printed volume; and he is welcome to the laurels which, unopposed, he has won on so questionable a field.

I have referred to a limited compliance, on my part, with his expressed wish, concerning the language of those "rough

“proof-sheets”—to my refusal to strike his name from a long list of gentlemen who, from time to time, had rendered me assistance, often accompanied with friendly suggestions, for the purpose of adding to the interest and value of my volume; and Mr. HAMILTON’s subsequent correspondence shall prove whether or not he did not subsequently waive even that objection to my editorial labors.

My reason for refusing to gratify Mr. HAMILTON by striking his name from my list was this: He had furnished for my use the portrait from which I copied that which I have since used in my volume; and he had personally visited the library of The New York Historical Society, where I principally labored, for the very purposes for which I rendered the thanks which, even now, I have no disposition to withdraw. The principal object of Mr. HAMILTON’s call was to examine the original portraits of General HAMILTON which hang in the Society’s gallery, and to offer such suggestions concerning them, for my use, as he might consider necessary. The result of that call, on the subject referred to, was his reiterated disapproval of all other portraits of his father than the TALLEYRAND miniature of which he had furnished me with a copy which I still own; and he also favored me, while at the library, with a careful examination of my plan for editing the work; he compared my corrected copy of the text of “*The Federalist*” with the *original edition*, and with the current mutilated copies of that text—both of which are to be found only in that library; he expressed his indignation at the liberties which had been taken with the *original* text by modern, so called, editors; he read, or listened while I read to him, every line of the illustrative notes to Number I. which were then before me, and which will be printed without any alteration, except one which *he* has since suggested, in my next volume; and he *approved*—

if I understand the term aright—and even applauded, my efforts to do justice to the work; closing the interview by renewing a previous warning of the opposition to my work which one of his brothers might possibly interpose; by urging me to disregard that animosity, should his brother show any; and by promising to me his own support and assistance. I conceived, therefore, that my thanks were *justly* due to him, and I refused, while I publicly thanked any one by name, to strike his name from the list. I have not yet changed my opinion on that subject; and your readers shall decide between us whether I acted properly in thus disregarding his wish in the correction of my “proof-sheets;” while his own correspondence, subsequent to the expression of that wish, shall serve as evidence of Mr. HAMILTON’s own opinion on the subject.

There is one subject in connection with these “rough proof-sheets,” however, which Mr. HAMILTON has not alluded to in his letter to you. Is this the result of mere forgetfulness, or was it inconvenient for the purposes of those who have managed this subject, “over HAMILTON’s signature,” to let the matter see the light?

The “proof-sheets” of the “Advertisement,” to which he has alluded in his letter to you, were accompanied in the same wrapper with similar “proof-sheets” of all those portions of the “Introduction” wherein Chief-Justice JAY and General HAMILTON were alluded to: and Mr. HAMILTON returned these also, *with no other suggestion* than: “I observe with regret that “your Introduction bears hardly upon Mr. DUANE, and that “others whose conduct was really censurable are not noticed;” and, consequently, the forms were sent to press, just as he returned them, without alteration.

If a “literary detective with a taste for calumny, who will

“go mousing about the scurrilous publications of the country “during the period of our ferocious party conflicts” is not an enviable character, as Mr. HAMILTON suggests in the latter part of his letter, why, in his letter of August 1, 1863, did he “observe with regret” that other “mousings” had not been made beside that concerning Mr. DUANE? Why, also, if General HAMILTON and Mr. JÁY had been improperly treated in those “proof-sheets,” were not *they* referred to when the “proof-sheets” were returned; and why were not *their* cases “regretted” in the accompanying note, as much as Mr. DUANE’S? Was his sympathy for Mr. DUANE greater than that for his father and Mr. JÁY; or has the offence become more heinous, since the matter is no longer in “proof-sheets” but in printed volumes?

Nor has Mr. HAMILTON’S memory served him better concerning his correspondence of a still later date.

The lamented death of his eldest daughter having occurred within a few days of the publication of my volume, I did not send a copy of the work to Mr. HAMILTON until the close of December; and five days after he received it, (January 2d, 1864), “with his best wishes” he sent to me the note which he has copied in his letter to you: “I sincerely hope your labors may “be requited by a rapid and extended sale,” he remarked therein, “which I will do all in my power to promote.”

Again: On the 9th of January, 1864, in a note in which he returned the original of President QUINCY’S letter addressed to me in commendation of my volume, Mr. HAMILTON defended the portrait of General HAMILTON which illustrates my work, from a criticism on its character as a likeness which Mr. QUINCY had made, and added: “I beg to renew my thanks for “*your most valuable edition of that great work. Your Introduction “is most interesting;*” and, in support of my views concerning

the authorship of the work, and in opposition to those of his brother, he added: "The question as to the authorship of "'No. LXIV.' is put at rest by the discovery of the manuscript "in JAY's handwriting."

A few days later I addressed a note to Mr. HAMILTON, inquiring the addresses of his brothers ALEXANDER and PHILIP S., and enclosing a notice of my volume and of its principal author, which had been published in the *Boston Traveller*. On the twenty-first of January he answered that note, giving the addresses of his two brothers, and adding: "I hope your work "is going off so rapidly as to permit you to make all these "presents, for which receive my thanks in advance;"—a suggestion which I was prevented from following only because the edition had been exhausted, when, a few days afterwards, I called at my publisher's for copies. At the same time he advised me of a fact which he had learned from one of his neighbors—that another edition of the work was in progress in Philadelphia—and evinced considerable solicitude on the subject; and he closed by referring to the notice of my volume in the *Traveller*, which I had sent to him, in these words: "*The notice of your work in the newspaper you sent to me is a just tribute to you and to my father. I thank you for it.*"

As the rival edition to which he alluded is that which is to be issued by the brother against whose opposition he had warned me, and is designed to defend and perpetuate the very corruptions in the text which he had noticed in such indignant terms at the library of The New York Historical Society, while the original and the corrupted texts were both before him, on the table at which he sat, his solicitude on the subject of the information which his neighbor had given to him can be easily accounted for; and it is not difficult to understand why he so promptly advised me of what he him-

self styled "a competitor in the market," when you shall remember the promise of his support and assistance, at the close of his interview with me in the library before referred to.

You may readily ascertain also, what, as recently as the twenty-first of January last, Mr. HAMILTON considered "a just tribute to you and to my father," from the following extracts from the article in the *Boston Traveller* of January 2d, 1864, to which he, himself, applied this remark: "Mr. DAWSON has done a noble work, and deserves the highest praise of his countrymen, in preparing this beautiful edition of *The Fœderalist*," etc. "This edition is the best that has appeared, and so far superior to all others, that comparison with any of its predecessors is entirely out of the question. He enumerates twenty different editions of the work . . . but all these editions must give way to the twenty-first, which leaves nothing more to be desired, so thoroughly has Mr. DAWSON discharged his well-assumed duty." "The Introduction, which extends to some eighty pages, is a history of '*The Fœderalist*,' complete in all its parts and speaking forcibly, in behalf of Mr. DAWSON's ability as a historian, an inquirer, and a critic, and showing how conscientiously, industriously, and impartially he has labored in the performance of a great task, one of the worth of which it is impossible to speak too highly." Surely if these remarks, with others which are not less gratifying to me, nor less honorable to my character as an Editor, were only "a just tribute" to me, on the twenty-first of January, 1864, they cannot have been less so on the fourth of the present month, when he wrote his letter to you. I leave it to Mr. HAMILTON and your readers to reconcile this difference of opinion.

Again: On the eighth of February, 1864, in acknowledging the receipt of a copy of the work on large paper, Mr. HAMILTON

remarked: "I pray you to receive my grateful thanks for this "renewed evidence of your kindness and attention," without alluding, even by inuendo, to his suspicion, if he entertained any, that he had received a libel on his father, or a misrepresentation of himself, or a falsification of the truth of history.

I need say little more on this subject. If my volume was so untrustworthy, or if my editorial labors had not been approved by Mr. HAMILTON, as I have stated in my letter to JOHN JAY, why, on the 2d of January, 1864—five days after his receipt of the perfected volume—did he extend to me "his "best wishes," both generally and for "a rapid and extended "sale" of the work, with his promise to "do all in his power "to promote" such a sale? If the memory of his father, or that of his father's friends had been *unjustly* referred to in my volume, why did Mr. HAMILTON, in the month of January, 1864, *without any reservation or condition whatever*, "beg to "return his thanks for *your most valuable edition of that great "work ;*" and why declare, at the same time, with equal emphasis, "your 'Introduction' is most interesting?" If my entire course had not been satisfactory to him, why, on the 21st of January, 1864, twenty-four days after the perfect volume had been placed in his hands, did he pronounce the elaborate and highly complimentary notice of the Boston *Traveller* "a just "tribute to you and to my father?" Why, indeed, on the eighth of February, was he still "grateful" for a more elegant copy of the same work, than that which he had previously received? Is it not incredible, Messrs. Editors, if any such insult really existed, that during all the period while Mr. HAMILTON was thus writing, he never alluded to nor even hinted at what he now affects, or others affect for him, to consider greivous insults to the memory of General HAMILTON and Chief-Justice JAY; that during the six weeks which

elapsed from his receipt of my completed volume, until his "grateful" acknowledgment of a second copy of it, *he never even discovered them*; and that it remained for the magnifying powers of JOHN JÁY, the younger, to make them perceptible to his less vigilant faculties?

The only subject of Mr. HAMILTON's letter which remains to be noticed is the stale one of "family papers," concerning which *I never pretended, and do not now pretend, that a single line was furnished by him for my use*. He appears to grieve because "the deceived public," as he has termed it, may suppose *he* supplied "the family papers of General HAMILTON relative to '*The Fœderalist*,'" which I propose to use in my work; but why should he grieve? Has he forgotten, or does he suppose "the deceived public" has forgotten, that the "family papers of General HAMILTON," *on all subjects*, have been made matters of merchandise, and that for several years past, as *the property of the United States of America*, those "papers" have been accessible to every respectable person who has desired to examine and make copies of them? At any rate, I would suggest that the son of General HAMILTON should be the last person to raise any question concerning his father's "family papers;" last of all should he be the person to agitate the question of the history of those papers, or the opportunity which others, besides himself, have enjoyed to know and use their contents.

There is one other subject, in connection with those "family papers," which Mr. HAMILTON has glanced at in his letter to you—he has more than glanced at it elsewhere; and JOHN JÁY, in a letter to me, which has appeared in your columns, has more elaborately discussed it.

Mr. HAMILTON states "I have no knowledge of any [such] "family papers of General HAMILTON; * * * * my brothers

"and friends know such papers do not exist," as those of which I have stated, and still state, I have copies which I intend to use.

Mr. HAMILTON professes to be an ardent admirer of the truth; he even claims to be an honorable man. In view of these professions, how does he reconcile this statement with the petition and description of those papers, by ELIZABETH HAMILTON, his mother, to the Congress of the United States, presented in the Senate on the 12th of January, 1846, and printed in *Senate Documents*, 29th Cong., First session, No. 52? While this claim was on his lips or under his pen, how dared he deny his own personal knowledge of the existence of any such "family papers" as I have described, in the face of his own assurance to the contrary, when, in January last, he was applied to by some other person, through one of his neighbors, for the use of such papers; and in the teeth of his letter to me, on the 21st of January last, in which he voluntarily communicated to me the particulars both of that application by his neighbor and of his answer thereto, how dare he repeat that denial in his letter to you? When he penned that letter to you, quite as well as at the date of his answer to "Mr. WILLIAMS," and at that of his letter to me, notwithstanding his assertions to the contrary, he well knew that "family papers" of General HAMILTON relative to '*The Federalist*'" really existed, and that some of them had been published by his mother in the edition of HAMILTON's works which she caused to be printed under her contract with the United States. [Vide *Congressional Globe*, 29th Cong., 2d Sess., page 88; *Statutes at Large of the United States*, Volume IX., page 284.] How then dare he look you in the face and ask space in your columns for the publication of such a denial? Did he tell a falsehood to his neighbor when he referred him to certain

printed copies of "family papers" of that description? Did he volunteer a lie when, without solicitation, in January last, he communicated to me that reference to printed copies of such papers, and the occasion which had produced it? . . . "I answered," were his words, "I have no such papers, and 'have never *seen* any. *There are two or three letters written by my father in 1787, referring to it, which are published in his 'works.'*" If not, how shall I characterize his denial, in his letter to you and elsewhere, of the existence of "any" such "family papers," and of the knowledge of his "brothers and "friends" concerning them?

One subject more and I will close. Like a "high minded" man, as he ever has been, Mr. HAMILTON warned me of the approach of a great catastrophe; and in a note dated on the 6th of March, 1864, he proposed terms on which "the great "impending injury to my character," as he subsequently termed it, could be averted—"your true course is to adopt Mr. JAY's "suggestion in the last paragraph of his published letter of the "13th February last," were his terms; and he hoped, "by adopting that course and informing him [J. A. H.] that I had decided to do so, I would release him from a very painful duty."

The character of the terms on which Mr. HAMILTON'S silence could have been obtained will be seen—as the motive of his offer will be seen also—when the paragraph of JOHN JAY'S letter, to which he alluded, shall be read. "I would suggest," was the very modest proposition, "that you shorten your 'Introduction' to the 'Federalist' *by striking out all your comments on the work, all your strictures upon its authors. ALL, IN* "SHORT, THAT CLAIMS TO BE EITHER CRITICAL OR HISTORICAL, *and that* "you make what amends you may for the singular injustice which, "whatever the motive or the cause, you have done to the authors of "the 'Federalist,' and especially to my [JOHN JAY'S] ancestors."

More amused than alarmed at the intimation of danger from Mr. HAMILTON, on the twelfth of March, 1864, I replied to his proposition to become accessory to my wrong-doing, by informing him that "I respectfully declined to comply with his request." The subsequent correspondence on this subject, which is not inconsistent with the above, when Mr. HAMILTON shall remove the ban of privacy which he has interposed, will further illustrate the subject.

Arrogantly assuming that his word can either create or destroy such an individual as I am, and indignant that I had rejected his proffered terms, Mr. HAMILTON has not considered it necessary even to attempt *to prove* the existence of any such error or misrepresentation as that which he has affected to discover in my volume; but, more indiscreetly as I conceive, he has adopted what he has supposed will be a shorter remedy—he *has rushed into print*. He could not have done more than this, had I, as in the case of JOHN JAY, referred unsatisfactorily to his grandfather, whom I have not even mentioned. By reference to my volume, which is on your shelf, you will perceive that I have not been guilty of any such impropriety—I have not even insinuated that General HAMILTON was a traitor to his party; and I shall consider myself fortunate, and my children may so consider me, if I ever deserve and receive as good a character as I have given to ALEXANDER HAMILTON, as he was in 1787, in my "Introduction" to "*The Fæderalist*."

Notwithstanding all that has been written against my work and myself, Messrs. Editors, it is a notable fact that *its great peculiarity remains unimpeached, even by Messrs. JAY and HAMILTON*; while the narrative of the causes which led to the preparation and original publication of the work stands uncontradicted even by my most malignant enemies. Why,

then, this acrimonious feeling which has been developed since my volume has been before the world? I challenge JOHN JAY and JAMES A. HAMILTON to indicate, *with competent evidence to prove it*, that I have fallen into any material error in that narrative. I invite them, and I invite all their friends, to produce competent testimony to shake a sentence of that "Introduction." I pledge myself, as I have done from the beginning, to correct any error into which I may have fallen, whenever competent testimony shall be offered, in any quarter, to prove that any such error really exists.

But the great peculiarity of the volume no one has dared to assail; and no one dare assail it, even by innuendo. The purity of the text of "*The Fæderalist*" is the feature which most concerns the reader of that work; and, as the original edition, which the distinguished authors wrote and corrected and published in the newspapers of the day, and which "THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK," to whom it was addressed, read and discussed and acted on at the polls, is in the city of New York, and may be examined and compared with my reprint by any respectable person who shall ask for permission to do so, the fidelity with which I have discharged my duties as its editor may be easily ascertained. I invite such an examination. It would please me greatly even if the JAY and the HAMILTON should condescend to become the examiners. What other editor of "*The Fæderalist*" dare make a similar offer; or, concerning what other edition than mine can this be said and adhered to?

In conclusion, let me, through you, respectfully suggest to those who are engaged in seeking to stifle historical inquiry, that the day has passed when the actions and opinions of public men, on public questions, are to be treated as too sacred in their character for the inspection and criticism of

“the vulgar throngs” who compose the sovereign people; and the sooner such pretenders shall adapt themselves to the new order of things the better will it be for themselves, for their posterity, and in many cases for the memory of their ancestors.

Your obedient servant,

HENRY B. DAWSON.

2010-81

